

Testimony – Dario Ortiz

Good evening, Senators and Representatives. My name is Dario Ortiz and I am a leader at St. Rose of Lima church in New Haven and a leader in CONECT.

On Saturday, the 1st of September, 2012, at approximately 9:00 pm, I was violently attacked outside my house by a local criminal who tried to rob me.

Faced with this brutal attack, I called 911 and together with my family detained the assailant until the police could arrive and arrest him for his crime. My family and I have cooperated with police since then to assure his prosecution and to assure that he cannot terrorize anyone else in our community.

Unfortunately, these attacks occur too often. Many times the criminals target Latino immigrants – hard working, humble men and women who are simply trying to help their families get ahead.

They target immigrants because many times, unlike me, immigrants are afraid to call the police and report crimes, because they do not have a driver's license or state ID. They worry that instead of being helped by the police, they will be harassed or even arrested and deported if the police discover their immigration status.

Although this very rarely happens, this **fear** is very real, and too many crime victims in our community choose to remain silent and **not** call 911.

For these reasons, as a crime victim, as an active member of my community, and as a parent and bread-winner, I urge you to pass this law to grant a driver's license to all who live in this state.

Thank you!